

497

Historic Landmarks
(w)



E. Bleemel Building

904-906 Poplar St., Terre Haute, IN
(812)232-2466



VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The furnishings included in Mogger's Brewery have survived time. Many wonderful structures and businesses of Terre Haute and the Wabash valley are gone but a few of their remaining artifacts can be seen here.

- *The most obvious is the advertising of the Terre Haute Brewing Company. This building was leased and this room used to make bottle caps for the Brewing Company. The Bleemel Building lease with the Terre Haute Brewing Company in 1905 required installation of 'modern electricity and plumbing,' according to our abstract.
- *FRONT BAR from the Elk's Building, north 7th St., near downtown.
- *BACK BAR is from BJ's Tavern Hulman St. Terre Haute near the tracks. There however is a note behind the mirror saying it was placed there in 1973, not indicating where it came from. Do you know?
- * WOODEN BEER COOLER (east wall) Anheiser Busch Co.(1900) from downtown Marshall IL, it was dismantled and rebuilt here.
- *GREEN PORCELAIN COOLER used for many years in the CowShed Tavern, Hulman St. Owners said they purchased this cooler from the Root family home(Allendale). I was told that Mrs. Root placed her flowers in this cooler.
- *GENERAL STORE COUNTERS AND BACK SHELVES are from an old General Store located East 40 near Cloverland, IN.
- *NATIONAL CASH REGISTER located on the General Store counter is labeled under the drawer as made for the Deming Hotel, Terre Haute, IN.
- *POPCORN MACHINE is from the Aragon Pool in Clinton, IN.
- *BRICK FLOOR is what remains of the Torner House on So. 4th St. Terre Haute. If you look around the room there are several brick with hand prints in the clay before being fired.

*SPINDLES IN LOFT PORCH have been salvaged from several area porches. The lower set of spindles however can be seen on the circa 1890 photograph of the Bleemel Building and were found in the attic. We took inventory and did not have enough to restore the original porch, so we used what we could here.

*DOOR(above loft) belonged to the boyhood home of Tony Hulman at 802 Chestnut St. This home has been razed but the entry door is displayed here complete with the original brass address numbers.

*STAINED GLASS AND ENTRY DOORS are from the Central Christian Church, north 7th St., near downtown Terre Haute.

ITEMS FOUND OUTSIDE THE WABASH VALLEY

*WAITER This wonderful waiter graced the entrance to the Beer Garden of the Silver Beach Amusement Park in Benton Harbor, Michigan, circa 1950.

*COFFEE MILL(large wheel) was used at Bloomingdales, New York, NY.

CANAL COOLER

The Wabash & Erie Canal came down what is now 9 1/2 Street and up to the early breweries occupying this building. There are five(5) confirmed coolers lining the dock system for the Brewery on the

Canal. Before refrigeration beer was taken underground for storage. Our storage area is a great distance from the loading dock and required a lot of effort to bring casks of beer up out of the ground. Additionally the flat boats on the Canal were not always on time. The Brewery workers would bring the beer up out of the underground and lower the kegs into these coolers, then pack them in sawdust and ice until the boats would arrive at the dock.

Fear of cholera('spread by driftwood on the canal'), lack of maintenance during the Civil War, combined with the development of the Railroads(early 1850's) led to the canals gradually being filled in. The Wabash & Erie Canal was closed by 1874.

Both Mathias Mogger and Ernest Bleemel's address at this location refer to the canal. The Bleemel Brewery address was simply 'near canal bridge'.

While excavating this cooler we found artifacts dating to the 1830's(SEE ITEMS FOUND in the TERRE HAUTE BREWERY MUSEUM). Included are ink wells, a candlestick, doll heads, bottles and a bag of coins.

During this period the Brewery workers were paid with a leather pouch of coins. We found a worker's weekly pay partially hidden in the wall of this cooler. The newest coin found dates to the 1860's.

The kegs displayed in the cooler are unusual early Terre Haute Brewing Co. beer kegs. The name is visible on the top.

Former brewery now bottles memories rather than beer

By Patty Poremba
Entertainment editor

It's hard to believe that a town that currently outlaws the sale of liquor on Sundays was once home to 12 breweries. "Drink beer. . . it's good for you," was the advice stamped on a circa mid-1940s crate of Champagne Velvet beer, manufactured by what was Terre Haute's leading brewery, the Terre Haute Brewing Co.

The history behind Terre Haute Brewing Co. can be literally unearthed by a visit to E. Bleemel Flour & Feed at 904-906 Poplar St. Mike Rowe bought the property in

ing a slice of Terre Haute's past that has compelled Rowe to concentrate his efforts on the brewery that once occupied a good portion of Poplar St. Numerous names and incarnations were associated with the brewery (see geneology), whose history spans over 150 years.

While no solid documents remain, Rowe speculates that the original Terre Haute Brewery was built around 1830. A number of prominent founding fathers played major roles in the development of the business, including Demas Deming, Chauncey Rose and Crawford Fairbanks (believe it or not, no Hulman's). Deming and Chauncey

the early 1890s, production of Champagne Velvet, the trade name adopted for the corporation's brew, was up to 325,000. By 1892, the brewery was the seventh largest in the country, though its fame was cut short by Prohibition and the business closed its doors in 1918 (however, Rowe discovered some letterhead in the building's rafters, dated 1923, with a drawing of a bottle of Champagne Velvet tout-ing it as a supposed "non-intoxicating beverage").

By 1931, the abandoned brewery was purchased by the Wabash Realty and Loan Co. and brewing operations were resumed on St. Patrick's Day of 1934. The corporation celebrated its 60th anniversary in 1949 with the brewery chugging out 1,500,000 barrels a year.

Then, at the height of its productivity, the brewery surprisingly shut down, closing its doors for good on Dec. 3, 1958. Rowe speculates that the owners responsible for the property at that time were just tired of the ownership and upkeep. Fortunately, Rowe eventually stepped in and saved this Terre Haute time machine from the wrecking ball.

The word "bizarre" keeps popping up when Rowe describes the excavation project of the brewery. Every layer of brick and limestone that he digs up only reveals more brick and limestone. At this point, even Rowe can't predict when the brewery will be uncovered in its entirety.

"Everything is being discovered piece by piece," said Rowe, likening the process to the completion of a jigsaw puzzle. The exterior of the building was the first part to receive a facelift and 15 coats of paint were power-washed off to finally reveal the original E. Bleemel Flour & Feed sign.

But it was the soul of the building that truly intrigued Rowe. As the digging began, he uncovered not only artifacts pertaining to the brewery, but such wonders as entrances to underground tunnels that lead to the Terre Haute Brewery bottling plant and icehouse.

"The tunnels were collapsed in 1942 and from what an old-timer has told me, there's 22,000 empty beer bottles and brewery equipment entombed in the middle of the tunnels," Rowe explained.

The Wabash and Erie Canal ran directly down the east side of Ninth



E. Bleemel Building 904-06 Poplar, circa 1832.

St. with the dock system coming up to the east side of Bleemel's. While the canal was filled in shortly after the Civil War (1865), Rowe found several coolers lining the former canal dock, chock full of old coins, inkwells, medicine bottles and a couple pairs of shoes.

"Before refrigeration, beer was stored at least 60 feet underground," Rowe commented. "To prepare the beer for transportation, it would be brought up into a cooler and packed in sawdust and ice to wait the arrival of the canal boats."

Equally fascinating are brewery business documents dating back to the 1940s. The union contract stipulated that workers could drink on the job. Not only that, but each employee was given 22 drink tickets a week which they could cash in for 22 bottles of Champagne Velvet beer.

Even the Champagne Velvet trademark is full of lore as detailed in an account in the brewery's museum: 1) the "velvet" came from a term used for fine spirits in the distillery. . . the best of the spirits were called "velvet;" 2) the "champagne" was chosen because the brewery made a light beer, possessing a champagne color and sparkle; and 3) it was adopted from a famed Dublin drink called "velvet" consisting of one part stout and one of champagne.

Now the property on Ninth and Poplar only quenches the imagination of customers, not their thirst. It's impossible to give full justice to the brewery's past and present glories in print, so a visit is a must. Museum and store hours are Mon. - Sat., 10:30 - 5:30 p.m.; Sun., noon - 4 p.m.; and closed Wednesdays.



Photo by Chris Howell

Terre Haute Brewery Co. Geneology

Ninth and Poplar (north side of Poplar)
before 1837 - Terre Haute Brewery
1848-60 - Mogger Brewery
1862-74 - Bleemel Brewery (Flour & Feed, 1874)

Ninth and Poplar (south side of Poplar)
1860-68 - Mogger Brewery
1868-89 - Mayer Brewery
1889-1958 - Terre Haute Brewery Co.

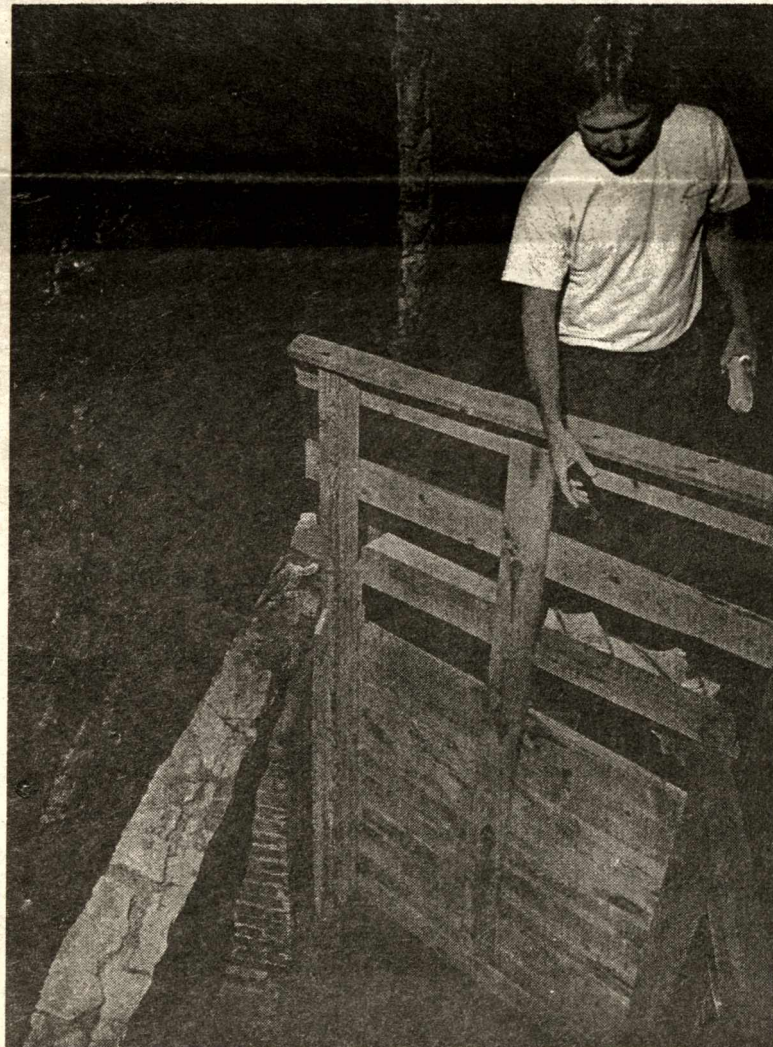


Photo by Chris Howell

Mike Rowe, owner of E. Bleemel Flour & Feed, points out the current excavation process.

1990 saving it from imminent demolition after it had been condemned by the city. Over the years, Rowe has painstakingly renovated the building to its former grandeur, and the space currently houses an antique store on the first floor, private apartments in a separate wing and a brewery exhibit and Civil War museum upstairs.

But it's been the draw of salvag-

Warren were trustees in the sale of the brewery nearly 50 years before Deming's son and Crawford Fairbanks & Associates purchased Anton Mayer's brewery in 1889. They incorporated and renamed the business the Terre Haute Brewery Co. and the firm began to enjoy its most rapid growth period.

While the annual production of beer in 1868 was 5,000 barrels, by

Volleyballers tangled in the net against Ball State

By Shawn Howe
Sports reporter

Net play killed the ISU women's volleyball team Tuesday, as they lost to Ball State 8-15, 6-15, 3-15.

The loss took the Sycamores to 10-9 overall, while BSU went to 11-5.

The Sycamores had an attack percentage of just .063 and committed 21 attack errors. BSU posted a percentage of .319 with just 12 errors.

For the season, ISU has an attack percentage of .251, but has struggled in the last two matches to raise it above .100 in the match.

The Sycamores had only 27 kills in the match, with Julie Meshberger, Linn Grove junior, leading the way with nine. Jessica Barkman, Seymour senior, added seven.

Kerri Huffman, a Selma senior, led the team in assists with 18.

Tishara Jespersen, a Lake Forest, Calif. sophomore, had eight digs to pace the way for ISU.

The Sycamores were without senior Stacy Stanton, of Kalamazoo, Mich. Stanton injured her ankle in the Loyola-Chicago tournament this past weekend.

"We've been struggling to fill that void," Woodward said about the loss of Stanton.

But Stanton will be ready for this weekend's action.

ISU will return to Missouri Valley

Conference play this weekend, as they hope to bring things together after the 1-3 record during the non-conference break.

"We knew we had four non-conference matches, so we took a deep breath and stepped back from what was an anxious situation," Head Coach Rhonda Woodward said. "We decided to remove ourselves from that must-win situation mentally."

Friday, ISU hopes to improve on their 6-3 conference record as they will travel to Drake University. Saturday they will stay on the road to face conference leader Northern Iowa. Drake is currently 5-4 in conference play and Northern Iowa is 9-1.

"This road trip is big," Woodward said. "All of our conference matches now are big. We're going to have to earn all of our wins the second time around."

The Sycamores defeated Drake earlier this season by a score of 15-13, 10-15, 15-13 and 17-15. They lost to Northern Iowa 15-13, 10-15, 6-15 and 4-15.

"We need to pull out of our lack of intensity mode to maintain our place in conference standings," Woodward said. "This road trip is exactly what we need, this way we'll be together all the time and we can pull through the things that are holding us back."

This Weekend in Sports

FRIDAY

Men's Tennis at Ball State Fall Invite in Muncie	8:30 a.m.
Volleyball vs. Drake in Des Moines, Iowa	7 p.m.
Men's Basketball "Midnight Mania"-ISU Arena	11 p.m.
preseason drills start at 12:01 a.m.	
Cross Country (M-W) at Indiana Intercollegiates in Bloomington	TBA
Women's Tennis at Missouri Valley Conference Tournament	TBA

SATURDAY

Men's Tennis at Ball State Fall Invitational in Muncie	8:30 a.m.
Women's Basketball start preseason drills at Hulman Center	11 a.m.
Softball vs. IU in Bloomington	1 p.m.
Rugby vs. IU at ISU	
Volleyball vs. Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls	7 p.m.
Soccer at Bowling Green Tournament	TBA
Women's Tennis at Missouri Valley Conference Tournament	TBA

SUNDAY

Baseball Intrasquad Scrimmage at Sycamore Field	Noon
Soccer at Bowling Green Tournament	TBA

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Tracy Lawrence
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Atlantic
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Chris Ledoux
Haywire
Liberty
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Ken Mellons
KEN MELLONS
Epic
\$7.88 TAPE \$12.88 CD

Cindy Mizelle
Cindy Mizelle
EastWest Records America
\$7.88 TAPE \$12.88 CD

Orrall & Wright
Giant
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Lyle Lovett
I Love Everybody
Curb/MCA
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Various Artists
Keith Whitley Tribute
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Time for well-deserved vacation

Rowe's refurbished building nearly finished

By Kelly Porter
Tribune-Star Business Editor

Mike Rowe is ready for a vacation.

After working 15- and 16-hour days for more than six months, Rowe believes he deserves a break from all the hustle and bustle at Ninth and Poplar streets.

The problem? It wouldn't last, and Rowe knows it.

"The last time I went on a vacation, I'd only been in Florida two days when my wife caught me speculating on some real estate there," he said laughing.

A workaholic, you think? Not really. Rowe just has a hard time relaxing, especially when there's so much to do.

"I'm just the type of person who likes to get things done," he said. "I don't like to let things sit empty or half-finished. I guess I just like to slow down enough to catch my breath."

Catching his breath is what Rowe plans to do — for a couple of days at least — while he contemplates his future plans for the once-condemned E. Bleemel Flour and Feed building at 904-916 Poplar.

So far, Rowe and his small crew of helpers have managed to transform that building from a run-down eyesore into a source of community pride.

Exterior walls that just eight months ago were a peeling mess now sport fresh coats of white paint, black shutters, gray windowsill accents and awnings and other maroonish paint highlights.



Tribune-Star/Bob Poynter

New life: Structure at intersection of Ninth and Poplar streets enhanced.

There's also a hand-painted sign on the building's southside that is "just as it was in 1875," Rowe said.

On the inside, grease- and grime-covered hardwood floors have been cleaned, stripped and refinished; walls have been painted; stairways repaired; and efficiency- and one-bedroom apartments made usable again.

There's no way to adequately describe all the work Rowe and Co. have done unless you saw the building before and could see it now.

"I'm happy with the results so far," a beaming Rowe said Friday, "but I'm not really surprised. But I guess you could say I didn't anticipate exactly how large a project this is; 13,500 square feet is a lot to bring back to life."

Indeed.

But Rowe is doing one heck of a

job of giving the building just what he intended six months ago — a lot of character.

Doors at each entrance came from the since-demolished Oddfellow's building. Marble insets in the main Poplar Street entryway are pieces of windowsills from the old Fairbanks Elementary School. And some of the woodwork and hardwood flooring came from the Oddfellow's as well.

On the residential side, which dates back to 1850, Rowe has renovated five apartments and rented four of them. Inside, lighted ceiling fans and decorative border-type wallpaper are common throughout.

An upstairs sixth apartment won't be that for much longer. Rowe plans to use it as an entryway to a second-floor loft area that may be used for commercial

purposes.

It's all a far cry from the automobile-repair business that occupied the building for 35 years prior to Rowe's ownership. And that's the way Rowe likes it.

"I've got big plans for this place," he said. "Eventually — when everything is ready and I'm ready — I'd like to see an antique shop, wood shop, or even a clock shop in the areas we're planning for commercially."

"I'm leaving my options open on the commercial side of things, though," he said. "I don't want people in here who are going to want to hang out signs or leave after three months. I want businesses that are compatible with the building's character."

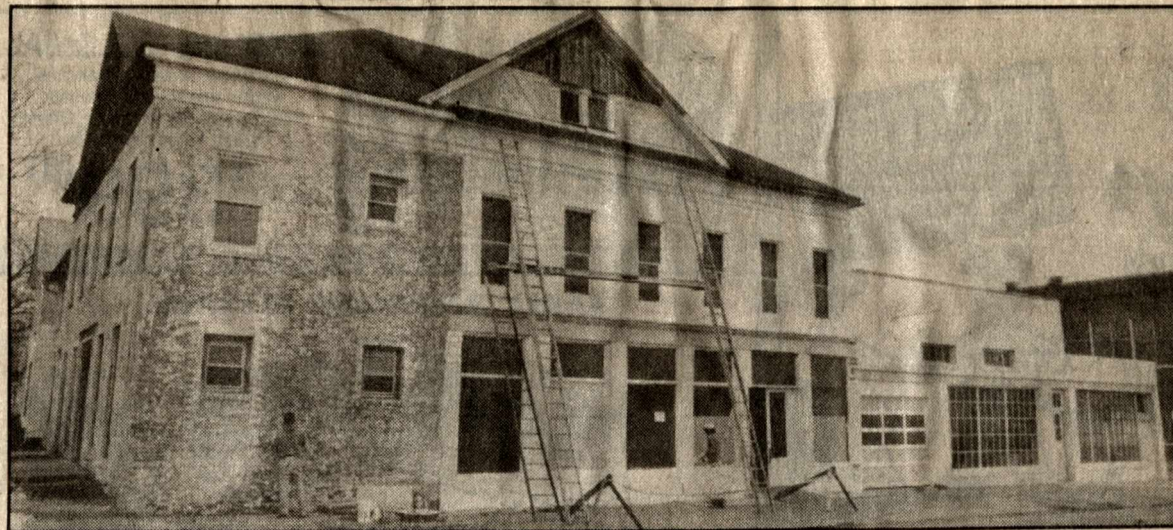
Rowe says it will be "a while" before those commercial prospects develop, mostly because he wants to take things a little slower now.

Working non-stop at a hurried pace has its advantages, Rowe said — like getting paying tenants to offset some of the costs that are mounting; giving impromptu tours to people who are "just passing by and interested"; and watching a dream become reality pretty quick.

Slowing down also has advantages, Rowe adds. It leaves time for all those other renovation projects currently on backburners; adding all the "finishing touches" to the apartment; and digging into the Bleemel building's history to find out more about the site of Terre Haute's first brewery.

It also may mean that Rowe has time for a vacation.

"Maybe the Bahamas," he said, chuckling. "Maybe not. There's still a lot to do here."



Tribune-Star/Jim Avalls

Fresh: Workers scrape, apply paint to Poplar Street side of Rowe's downtown project.